



Armed Forces Retirement Home

Communicator

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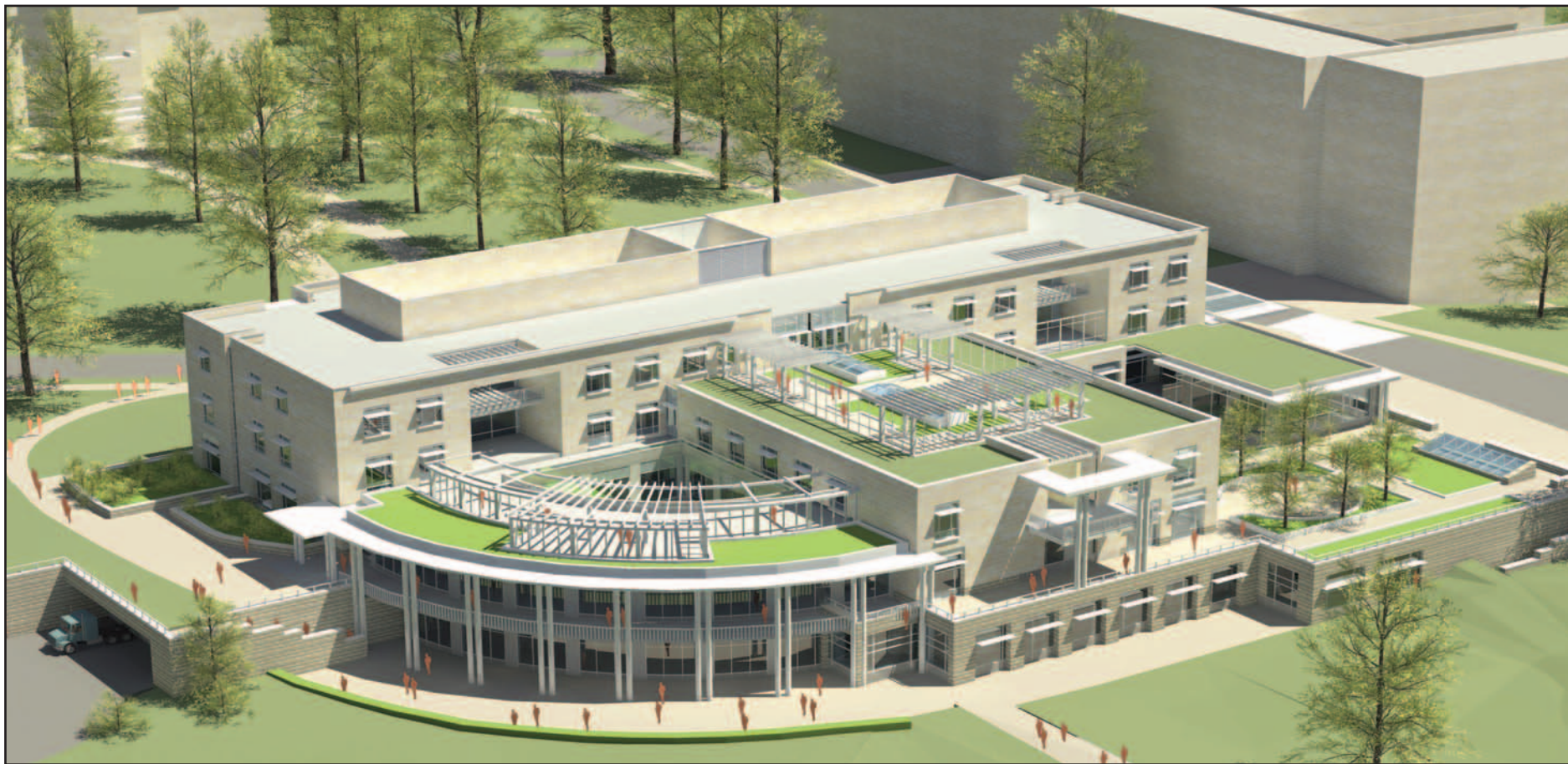
Design of AFRH-W new Commons final

The new Commons building at the AFRH-W will provide a skilled nursing facility with single bedroom units for 36 long term care residents and 24 memory support residents in the same structure with campus-wide amenity spaces and a wellness center.

Key to the design of the new health center is the “small house” concept where residential units are clustered in groups of 10-12 around common living and dining rooms, replacing the institutional style double loaded corridor layout. The new Commons and Health Care Center will be the center of activity for the entire community

and will be the place where residents convene for socializing, physical fitness, educational pursuits, musical interests, dining, business transactions and many other recreational activities.

Modernization of the aging AFRH-W campus is being accomplished to keep pace with changing needs in senior care, like compliance with the American Disability Act requirements. To make way for the new Commons building, beginning early next year, the Scott building, which is the oldest dormitory on campus, will be demolished.



This is an artists' rendition of the new Commons building at the AFRH-W. Construction begins next summer and is scheduled to be completed in 2013.

Veteran's Day Salute

Northwest Florida Chapter rumbles onto AFRH-G

Motorcyclists from the Navy Air Technical Training Command and the North Florida Harley Davidson Owners Group roared through the AFRH-G gates on Thursday, November 11, to meet and honor fellow veterans. Residents came to the front of the building to see the colorful, patriotic motorcycles and to meet the veteran riders. It was a beautiful south Mississippi Veterans Day made much more pleasant with special visitors from Florida.



Water Break - Marine resident Andrew Chapura watches as the motorcycle group mascot Duke takes a break from the morning's activities and stretches out for a nice bowl of water.



Veteran motorcyclists from the Navy Air Technical Training Command and the North Florida Harley Davidson Owners Group come through the AFRH-G gates on Nov. 11 to give residents a personal Veterans Day greeting.

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The AFRH Communicator is an authorized publication of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Residents and employees are encouraged to submit photos, art, news items, and features. Materials will be edited by the *AFRH Communicator* staff for journalistic style and length. The articles included in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the management, staff, or residents of the AFRH.

Serving Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, Mississippi



AFRH is not just a place to live but a place to live more. Our model retirement communities are designed for residents to maintain an independent lifestyle in an environment designed for safety, comfort and personal enrichment.

Eligibility:

Military veterans from each service branch can live at AFRH.

The following persons who served as members of the Armed Forces, at least one-half of whose service was not active commissioned service other than as a warrant officer or limited-duty officer), are eligible to become residents of the Retirement Home:

Veterans with 20 or more years of active duty service and are at least 60 years old, or

Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to a service-connected disability, or

Veterans unable to earn a livelihood due to injuries, disease, or disability, and who served in a war theater or received hostile fire pay, or

Female veterans who served prior to 1948.

To receive an informational brochure please contact the AFRH Marketing Office at 1-800-422-9988, or write to AFRH, PAO/Marketing, #1305, 3700 N. Capitol St. NW, Washington DC 20011-8400.

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.AFRH.gov>

Become a resident today!

A CARF-CCAC Five-Year
Term of Accreditation was
awarded to the Armed Forces
Retirement Home.
<http://www.carf.org>
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At AFRH, times have really changed through the years

By Wilfred 'Mac' McCarty

When I first reported in to the Old Soldiers' Home back in 1967 things were not as well organized, disciplined or as nice as now.

I was told to report to the Admissions Office. That day an elderly resident was manning the office and the first words spoken to me at the Home in a very low funeral voice was: "Mr. McCarty I have to ask you a very personal question. When you go where do you want to go? I said if you mean when I die (he didn't want to use the word die), I guess to Heaven. He said, "No I mean do you want to go to the Home cemetery or Arlington (to be buried)." I hadn't thought about dying just then. I was sent to the hospital for a medical check and put in pajamas and my clothes taken away. I got up and walked up to the top of the hill as I wanted so see what the place looked like. Security escorted me back to the hospital. One guy went over to the Catholic Shrine in his pajamas to see if he could get a job as a carpenter as they were working on the Shrine. They phoned back to the home saying, "I think we

have one of your people here." Ha. I was first assigned to a six-man squad room in the Grant. I opened the door and walked in and a resident was drunk and swigging from a bottle (not milk). He cussed me out and told me I was to knock before entering. Trying to be nice and fit in the next day I knocked and he bellowed. What the hell are you knocking for. In the dayroom there was someone, perhaps drunk, hollering, "What is that guy doing here I bet he has not seen any combat." I suddenly realized he was talking about me and wonder what the hell have I got myself into. But then I met some residents that were more amiable. One was a nice guy that had been a POW in Germany. He would lay in his bed on one side of room and holler over at me telling me war stories. He talked nonstop. One night I said "Charley I can't stay awake any longer." I woke up the next morning and there he was laying in bed looking over at me and he continued in the middle of the sentence where he had left off the night before. I think he stayed awake all night to pull that stunt on me.

Charlie did not like rules and inspections. For one inspection he threw all his junk

in the corner and threw a blanket over his stuff. The inspectors did not ask him what was in the corner and he got away with it. Another time he had a mop in his hand as the inspectors arrived as if he had just been mopping the floor. Ha. I don't know if he lost his taste buds as a POW or what but he delighted in recommending and insisting I eat at some greasy spoon downtown where the food would be awful. Maybe this was another joke he was pulling on me. At inspection time the floor sergeant would open the door and say "Gentlemen the Governor." A friend of mine forgot this was inspection day and was still in bed. The Governor asked him if he was sick and he nodded his head yes Ha.

Another roommate who was kind of ugly however had a very good looking younger girlfriend in Annapolis or Baltimore. Her father owned a department store and she and her mother would wear an outfit one time and then give it to my roommate who would give them to the girls out at the corner bar. One time we had a surprise inspection and the guy hadn't delivered the dresses and they were hanging in our room. The inspector smiled and asked which one of us was wearing dresses. We each pointed to the other Ha.

Another interesting resident was a small guy that had been on the Bataan Death March. On payday he would convert all his

pay to change and go out to the corner bar and throw the money up into the air for the girls to scramble for and the rest of the month he would be broke. He was small and wore his hat at a rakish angle and one had to smile when you saw him but he was always getting into trouble but because he had been in the Bataan Death March they gave him a lot of leeway until they couldn't anymore. We were shocked, as was he, when he was kicked out of the Home. Too many complaints about him I guess and enough was enough.

Through the years the home got better disciplined and better in all ways.

I appreciate it.



Typical room at the U.S. Soldiers' & Airmen's Home in the 1960s and 70s.

Message from the Chief Operating Officer



You might not be aware that AFRH is required to submit a Performance and Accountability (PAR) report to Congress on November 15th of each year. I am pleased to announce the report has been submitted and we have received our 6th consecutive unqualified audit opinion. For the last seven years we have worked very hard to become good stewards of the trust fund through efficient management. Being a good steward of the trust fund is only half of the process. We also have strived to be good stewards to the ones we serve daily. Our mission continues to be to fulfill our nation's commitment to its veterans by providing a premier retirement community with exceptional residential care and extensive support services. I believe we are leading the nation in caring for veterans in all levels of care at both facilities.

Some of you might have noticed that a different theme appears on the front cover of the PAR, but did you know that each theme is a continuation of the previous year and made a part of the current theme? This year's theme is the Power of Progress, which carries

forward from last year's theme, Focus Forward and the year before Building Vitality. You may review the FY2010 PAR on-line at the following link: <https://www.afrh.gov/afrh/about/par/par10.htm>. You may also review a copy of the PAR located in the Ombudsman's office at each facility.

As we approach the new year, the Armed Forces Retirement Home has moved from an ordinary retirement community into a extremely efficient retirement community serving America's veterans. This past year we have seen numerous programs implemented such as the Independent Living Plus pilot program, which has proven to be a very successful program for our residents.

When we entered 2010, my team was focused on opening the Gulfport facility to residents on October 4th of this year. As we approach the end of the year the Gulfport facility will have been open for two months and full occupancy is expected in the Independent Living area by the end of the year. It is so rewarding that so many of you in Gulfport provided positive feedback about the facility and staff during the grand opening celebration on November 9th. You are truly home.

During this time we are also gearing up to complete the "New Commons," design at the DC campus and have started the relocation of residents and services into the Sheridan building from the Scott building. My team has made sure we are on track in all relocations so that we can start the Scott

building demolition and proceed with the construction process in the fall of 2011. During this past month we have several projects underway in the Sherman building. The main floor north and annex area have been emptied out and construction has begun to relocate the dining services and movie theater into these areas. We are also continuing work on the above ground tunnel that will allow for easy access from the Sheridan to the Sherman building. In the next few months we will continue to provide project updates through the web site, focus groups and bulletin boards located in the Sheridan mailroom. We value your suggestions regarding the Scott Project and encourage all of you to attend the monthly focus group meetings.

I wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

Timothy Cox



Harry Gordon (Gulfport resident) speaks with Tim Cox and Robert Gordon, III, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy about his new home and living on the coast.

History lesson Sherman Building renovation project

Renovation on the main floor of the Sherman building is well underway. The main floor north and the annex area is currently being cleared out so new construction can begin. Services to be relocated into this area will be the dining facility, kitchen services and movie theater areas.

The original building was first known as "The Main Building", completed in 1855. It is currently referred to it as the Sherman Building.

According to the Soldiers' Home board meeting minutes dated December 15, 1888 the main building names were

approved and adopted. The main building (clocktower) will be called "Scott Building" after the late Major General Winfield Scott, U.S. Army (Brevet Lieutenant General). The new north wing of the main building will be called "Sherman Building" after General William T. Sherman, U. S Army, Retired.

In April 20, 1889 the committee approved and adopted plans to improve the center wing of the Scott Building (now knows as the Annex area) which allowed easy access between the Scott and Sherman buildings.



Above: Sherman annex area in the late 1890s originally was home to a library and reading area.
 Below: Soon new services will be relocated into this area such as kitchen service area and movie theater.



Above: Sherman main floor dining area in the late 1890s.
 Below: Sherman main floor is under renovation in order to turn this section back into a dining area.



From the AFRH-W Director



Last week a friend of mine said, “The pilgrims got it right . . . being thankful.” He was referring to the wonders of living in the United States. I write this article at the beginning of

Thanksgiving week. Thanksgiving is a holiday to express thankfulness, gratitude, and appreciation to God, family and friends for which all have been blessed of material possessions and relationships. Traditionally, it has been a time to give thanks for a bountiful harvest. Whether the day originated at the Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts in 1621 or by Spanish explorers in Florida in 1565, it has become a day to express our thankfulness to God and those around us.

Being thankful is profitable for us too. “Scientific studies show that being grateful increases happiness by 25 percent and those who purpose to be grateful are more likely to exercise, more likely to report better sleep; less likely to report physical complaints. There’s even some research done when you have a sense of appreciation your heart rhythms are more coherent and smooth, which of course is healthy.” (www.Health.com, July 2008).

I am thankful to be living in America. I heard a missionary from India speaking Sunday about the extreme persecution of so many in that India and other places around the world. There are many things wrong with this country but there are so many things right as well. There are still social security and retirement checks. There are freedoms and rights and places and things to conquer.

I am thankful to be a part of the Armed Forces Retirement Home. This place is amazing and has a mission with purpose. I so

enjoy the great variety in people that make their home here in Washington and in Gulfport. The peculiarity in people is truly a study of fascination and you all make the work of it a joy. There are those of you who are happy and others who are ornery, some who are very funny, etc. It is rewarding to be with you and to work in such a place where I can make many friends and acquaintances. And I am happy for you who are able to live here. From experience, I can say that I know of no other retirement center that offers so much. The history at our Gulfport and Washington homes, the military flavor with the pomp and ceremony of the events that take place make it totally unique. The historical Washington Home that impresses everyone who visits. In my office sits the “Lincoln Desk” with a plaque stating, “This desk is reported to be the one used by President Lincoln during his visits to the Anderson Cottage. It was on this desk that he prepared the final draft of the Emancipation Proclamation.” The opportunities we have to benefit from all that is in the U.S. Capitol city. And this is very cheap living compared to anyplace else, and the other places that I speak of do not offer transportation, the top-quality medical and dental care, or have thousands of volunteers who work to improve the life of the residents. There is no other place is like this. And now our friends in Gulfport can watch the sunsets over the ocean, walk the beach or play bocce ball. The new facility in Gulfport is magnificent that is so tastefully finished. The grand opening ceremony was spectacular and as Tim Cox said, “It went off without a hitch.”

I have a job that I enjoy and I am thankful to be working. Many of our fellow Americans are struggling and all the staff and contract labor at the AFRH need to be grateful. While I was at the Gulfport Grand Opening, I overheard the Gulfport Safety Officer, Frank Bermudez talking to someone and said that he was so privileged to have

Notes from the AFRH-W Resident Advisory Council



Well the new Armed Forces Retirement Home - Gulfport has officially joined the AFRH family. I was honored to be allowed to attend the ceremony that officially

opened the home and I can report that not one person I spoke to spoke anything but good thoughts about this facility. And I did not find anyone who wished to return to the Washington facility.

And what a facility it is. It reminds me of a very fine hotel but enough of what is new I would like to take to take this time to offer a challenge to those of us who remain in the Washington facility. This challenge is to make every effort to insure that each day that we are here is better than the day that just passed. We should insure that each of us worry about the person living next door to us. Look out for the other person and they will look after you. This should be about we are about, this is what we should do.

With the movement of so many residents to the other facility the Resident Advisory Council is in need of new floor representatives. The need currently is for floor representatives for the second, fifth and seventh floor of the Sheridan. No more floor representatives are going to be appointed for the Scott Building

What kind of people are we looking for? Well, to me the most important thing is that they are not people who quit the first time they have something they want to do shot down by the administration. I need peo-

ple who are looking to the future not the past, people who care about other people; residents who want to serve their fellow residents, insuring that their housing, food, and health facilities are better than other homes of the same type in Continuing Care Communities. The Resident Advisory Council (RAC) needs people who are not afraid to fail. There are, as usual, other requirements that are detailed in the home regulation that sets up the RAC that will be covered with you when you volunteer for the position. Also these are stipend positions which require that an accounting of the time you spend on your RAC work. I hope that many of you will wish to avail yourselves of this volunteer job.

And now on to what I had mentioned in my last column in the Communicator - my vision of the Armed Forces Retirement Homes. Well, it is 2045 and the new buildings at the Washington Campus have been completed. These new building meet all requirements of current law and some say that they are the best retirement homes yet built for those authorized to use them. In addition an additional home is being completed in one of the Western states on land donated to the home by a former member of the Armed Forces. The redevelopment of the Washington campus area continues and should have a final build-out by 2060. Well one can always wish and that is what this paragraph is about – wishing for the future.

I hope each of you has a great Christmas wherever you choose to spend it. When you get back make sure you say “hi” to a new resident, say “hi” to an old resident and finally remember - I love this place and you should too.

Esker F McConnell

landed his job. I say the same thing and I have been here for almost three years. Not only are we employed but all of us who work here know that we are contributing to the residents in a meaningful way.

I am grateful for my family, friends all over the world, internet access, digital cameras, music, health insurance, the ability to cook, Facebook, a college education, having been in the Navy, books, forgiveness, bonfires, sunshine, working washers and dryers,

music, laughter, food, residents who love God, scented candles, sunshine, and even my mother-in-law. I am thankful for a wife who loves me, makes me laugh, puts up with me, and is a considerate mother, a fun grandmother, an encourager of people, and a servant to others.

Yes, the pilgrims did get it right. And we can get it right as well, with an attitude of Thanksgiving and gratefulness.

David Watkins

Veterans Day Wreath Laying

By Carolyn Weber

On a gorgeous sunny day in November, the Veteran’s Day Wreath Laying Ceremony commenced outdoors at the AFRH-W flagpole. Surrounding the flag were many residents, Howard University ROTC Cadets and staff. Chaplain Goodloe gave the benediction followed by reflections by resident George Smith and Cadet Banks on what the day means to them. A selection of letters, written by 5th grade students from Mantua Elementary School in Fairfax, VA, to our veterans, were read aloud by our ROTC Cadets thanking our veterans for their service to our country and asking questions such as “What did you eat?” “Did you get hurt?” The letters were disseminated to our residents after the ceremony. Cadet Mingo and Major Sellers laid the wreath followed by the benediction given by Father Dixon. Thank you to all who took part and attended the ceremony!

Resident honored all veterans during the ceremony: “I am like a lot of other war veterans of all branches of service, both women and men who has served their country in one way or another. On this day, I would like to say how honorable and distinguishable all of us performed. This day is a day of recognizing the military vet-



erans of all ranks and status, a day which should be honored by all, for the gallantry which has been shown. The flag must be honored and saluted at all times. The flag and veterans represent a freedom for everybody. From President Obama to the people of America, we should always remember this day.

“Our younger generation will have to learn of our hard success by fighting wars around the globe. Freedom is not free. Freedom has to be won by every-day working people and the military. A day set aside to thank the Lord for our good will to others. The crosses on the military graves are a reminder to us all that freedom was not handed to us.

“I sincerely hope this day, of the flag and the veterans, will not be forgotten.”

Marine Corps celebrates 235 years



L-R: Phyllis Bradford, Corporal James Walker (youngest Marine), SgtMaj Joseph Davenport, III, John Miller and James Riordan cut into 235 years of history.

On Monday, November 8th residents and employees got together to celebrate the 235th Marine Corps Birthday. Sergeant Major Joseph M. Davenport III from Headquarters and Service Battalion, Henderson Hall was the guest speaker and was most appreciative of sharing this special day with our residents.

Resident Phyllis Bradford and Lance Corporal James Walker had the

honor of cutting the first slice of cake, assisted by Sergeant Major Davenport III, RAC Vice Chairman John Miller and resident James Riordan who introduced our guest.

After the ceremony everyone enjoyed some refreshments and some wonderful music played by our own DJ Billy White. Thank you all for coming.

Resident stories continue for a BIG FINALE

Starting in February 2010, several AFRH-W residents, recreation staff and their partner, Double Nickels, a reminisce theatre group, have been gathering military stories for a book to be published. After a mid-year storytelling event in the Scott Theatre, the group moved to the LaGarde facility to continue the story gathering. Along the way, Double Nickels has partnered with the Washington National Opera and on December 9th the opera is going to perform a one-act operetta of seven of these true tales! At this time, the first edition of the book “Who We Were” will be finished! What a great year it has been!

From the AFRH-G Director



The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Gulfport has transformed from a building to a retirement community in the past six weeks. Back in October, the construction was substantially complete, most of the furniture and equipment was in place and many staff members were hired, trained and ready to go.

We had directives from the head of our Agency, standard operating procedures, contracts for service and Memos of Understanding with other agencies. The Navy Exchange was stocked, dining services had food on the shelf and in the coolers and Fiddler’s Green was ready to serve beer and wine, but the building was still a building.

Then we added 380 residents and the Navy Exchange and Fiddler’s Green came alive, the Wellness Clinic began seeing peo-

ple, food was prepared and consumed and staff had its purpose: Serve those who have served so well. Has everything gone smoothly? To paraphrase a current television ad, Does a former drill sergeant make a good psycho-therapist?

Other than the forced move from Gulfport to Washington following Katrina, I doubt that any retirement community has moved in that many people in such a short span of time. To my knowledge, no brand new community has ever done it.

Of course very few retirement communities have the special talents possessed by the residents and staff of the two Armed Forces Retirement Homes. The residents spent their careers mobilizing for different actions as did many of the staff members of the two homes. The logistical efforts and can-do attitudes of all involved made the incredible relocation efforts possible.

From the start I have devoted my Communicator articles to discussing construction and staffing progress and preparations for opening. This article signals a transition to operations and I will approach my articles from different angles in the future. It has been my pleasure to keep everyone informed



Active duty members of the Sergeant’s First Class Association continued their support of the AFRH-G residents on Friday, November 19, passing out AFRH mugs filled with sweet treats and a NEX gift card.

about our progress preparing the home for occupancy but now I will move into other areas of commentary and I hope you will find them informative as well.

December 7th marks the 69th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor; please remember to thank a Veteran for keeping you free to celebrate the holiday of your choice. On behalf of everyone at AFRH-G, have a safe and joyous holiday season.

Richard Heath

Weather Channel features first Thanksgiving at AFRH-G



Residents in the Spotlight
A producer and video specialist from the Weather Channel visited the AFRH-G on Monday, November 22, to talk with the residents and feature the new building. While here, producer Chris VonSeeger interviewed several residents.

Left - Richard Halloran talks about his time in the Navy and what it feels like to be back at the AFRH-G for Thanksgiving. Above - A video is made of residents enjoying the many activities that are available at the new Home.

Fleet Reserve Association



Generous donation from Branch 371
The Fleet Reserve Association, Branch 371, visited the AFRH-G on November 9 and gave a \$1,000 donation for the resident fund. Robert Rutherford, left, sponsored the visit and is leading the effort to re-establish the FRA branch at the AFRH-G. Pictured also with FRA representatives is Laura Slack, AFRH-G Chief, Resident Services.

Variety of events held at AFRH-G during month of November

In observance of Veterans Day, the AFRH-G held its’ Grand Opening ceremonies and events on Tuesday, November 9th. The day included comments by the Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy, the Administrator of General Services Administration and AFRH Director Rick Heath. Residents enjoyed performances by the Navy Band, Wings Canteen performing arts group and a World War Two Jeep display.

On Veterans Day, Thursday November 11th, residents Bob Rutherford, Charlie Jenkins and Doris Jones were guest speakers at Hancock North Central Middle and High school. They spoke to the children about the history of our Pledge of Allegiance, what it means to be a patriot and to serve in the Armed Forces. The day rounded out with a special visit from motorcycle groups from the Navy Air Technical Training Command and the North Florida Harley Davidson Owners Group. They had lunch with the residents and really enjoyed hearing their stories and all residents got a kick out of viewing their

motorcycles. One special guest was Duke, the U.S. Marine Corps bulldog mascot, who rode in with the motorcycle group. The evening ended with a visit from the “Single Sailors” from the CB base, who helped with the popcorn matinee. It was a very busy but memorable week of celebration.

The AFRH-G observed the 235th birthday of the United States Marine Corps on Friday, November 12th. Captain Jason Burgan, Inspector-Instructor, 3rd Platoon (REIN), Company A, 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion spoke briefly, followed by a cake cutting ceremony. The cake was cut by Captain Burgan, Master Gunnery Sergeant (ret) Fredrick Bowers, our oldest Marine at age 92, and Corporal Tony Godinez, the youngest Marine at age 20. Music and dancing followed and the young Marines were on hand to dance with the ladies. Everyone had a wonderful time with over 65 residents attending the event.

Check the December calendar for next month’s recreation activities

Getting Settled In

Life at the AFRH-G



Sunny November - Residents enjoy the warm tropical temperature on Saturday, November 20.



Art Specialist Debbie Pearson (center) teaches an art class to residents.



Let the games begin - Friendly card games resume at the AFRH-G.



Recreational Day Trips - Hugh Wingo looks over memorabilia at the World War II Memorial in New Orleans.



Picture perfect - Residents have enjoyed the beautiful sunrises and sunsets offered on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

“Ageless Art”***Arts & Crafts Corner*****By Lori Thompson**

November’s Art happenings were simply amazing. Our first event was a show entitled “Home” at The Creative Alliance in Baltimore on Veteran’s Day. We were invited to participate in this veteran art extravaganza by the Veteran Artist Program (VAP). The following residents had artwork on display: Mimi Rivkin, Mike Martinez, Warren Helm and Patrick Johnson (Gulfport). The evening’s activities included an art exhibit, live music, dramatic and comedy skits, and the debut of “Ageless Art,” a film by BR McDonald and Josh Davidson.

“Ageless Art” is a documentary film about some of our Armed Forces Retirement Home artists. It was a HUGE hit! After the film the artists who were present, Mimi Rivkin and Mike Martinez, were invited onstage and introduced to the packed house with thundering applause. At the end of the evening, Mimi Rivkin went back onstage and fielded questions with grace and wit. She had the audience in stitches! Thank you BR and Josh for producing such an insightful film about our artists and home. The film really captures the spirit of The Armed Forces Retirement Home-Washington.

Our second highlight of the month

was Catharine Deitch’s magical performance at Center Stage in Baltimore on Monday, November 15th. Catharine was invited by Laura Wexler of Stoop Story Tellers to tell her story. The Stoop’s show entitled, “War Stories,” was organized to honor Veteran’s Day. In her piece, Catharine recounted her enlistment into the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps and her subsequent adventures to a spellbound audience. The entire performance was broadcast live via WYPR, FM 88.1. A hearty thank you goes to Laura Wexler for inviting AFRH to participate in this Tribute to Veterans event.

If you would like to listen to Catharine’s performance or see the film, “Ageless Art,” both may be accessed at: www.veteranartistprogram.org

In closing, we would like to invite any residents or employees to participate, as a vendor and/or as a shopper, in our Holiday Craft Fair on Friday, December 10th, 12:00 - 5:00 PM, on Main Street in LaGarde. Residents, employees and several outside vendors will have their wares on display. Please be sure to stop by and visit our holiday crafters. We guarantee you will find something for your holiday gift giving needs!

Veterans Day BINGO with Omega Psi Phi Fraternity**By Amanda Jensema**

Veteran’s Day this year started out with a heart felt “Thank You” and a fun filled game of BINGO. The Lambda Gamma Gamma Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity hosts a BINGO game on Veteran’s Day every year. They not only provide a fun way of celebrating and honoring our veteran’s, but they also provide a delicious cake and special prizes. Their chapter is located out of Ft. Meade, MD and they are a military alumni chapter. Several games of BINGO were played and



then they socialized with the residents and enjoyed cake and punch together.

Our residents look forward to their visit every year.

People Animals Love Orientation**By Amanda Jensema**

Every third Saturday of each month the Recreation Area of the King Health Center goes to the dogs. The PAL’s organization, which stands for People Animals Love, lead an orientation for families interested in having their dogs become PAL certified. During the orientation, Fran, who is the volunteer coordinator for PAL, discuss the history of PAL and information related to visits. They also go over the process of how their dog will become certified. The

dogs and their owners must go to two visits before they become certified as a PAL dog. Because the residents of the King Health Center enjoy seeing, petting, holding and playing with the dogs, the orientation also counts towards their first visit. Many dogs come through the orientation of all different breeds sizes and personalities. It is always a pleasure to see new dogs and volunteers and it ALWAYS puts a smile on our residents faces!



Louis Dicroce makes a new friend during the PAL’s recent visit to the King Health Care Center.

“Hero’s Bowl” hosted by Recreational Services**By Jerry Carter**

The American Youth Football League honored our veterans here at AFRH-W with a football game between the Prince Georges Chargers & Stafford-VA Raiders. This game took place on Saturday, November 6th and our residents were treated to a exciting game. The PG Chargers defeated the Stafford Raiders 14 - 12. The objectives for this unique bowl game was to educate the players on the courage, honor, hard work, and sacrifice of our veterans, and how these qualities

are very alive and can be found in the game of football. Also to show the residents that they are not forgotten, and that we honor their service. A special half time program took place to honor all our residents here at AFRH. This was a memorable event and Recreation services thanks the American Youth Football league, coaches, parents, league officials, and our veterans for being part of this bowl game.

Volunteer Services host two special events***People to People and Joint Services Military Family Volunteer Day*****By Carolyn Weber**

“Thank you for your service!” “Happy Veteran’s Day” “God Bless the USA” were some of the words painted on clay pots crafted by students from around the country. On the day before Veteran’s Day, Over one hundred 5th – 8th grade students and their teachers in the People to People Ambassador Program delivered potted pansies and enjoyed lunch with the residents of the Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington.

The students were nominated by their teachers and applied to be a part of the program, which spends a week in and around DC visiting Arlington National Cemetery, the White House, Marine Corps Museum and AFRH to name just a few places. Kathleen Robertson, People to People Program Coordinator, said, “We received rave reviews and felt it truly a heartfelt project.” The students enjoyed the opportunity to meet our nation’s veterans, an experience they will take home with them.



Students from all over the United States had a chance to meet and have lunch with several residents during their recent trip to Washington, DC.

Day of Service benefits AFRH-W residents**By Carolyn Weber**

National Family Volunteer Day is an annual day of service designed to demonstrate the power of families who choose to volunteer together to support the communities in which they live and serve. On Saturday, November 15th, 143 family members from the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Navy and Marines joined forces for a day of service at the Armed Forces Retirement Home – Washington. We also received great showing of volunteers from Public Health Services, Navy Seabees and Girl Scout Troop 6563.

The volunteers jumped right into different projects and activities, including moving supplies from the Craft Cottage over to the Sherman Building; assist with running the KHC Sports Fair; making cards, ornaments and banners to stir up the holiday cheer in the Home; and compete in a Mini Golf Contest and Bowling Tournament with the residents. Additionally, a few of our ladies received manicures from a volunteer who is a licensed beautician. The highlight of the day was seeing our military families meet, socialize and laugh with our veterans who have paved the way.



Service members and their families are creating beautiful greeting cards for our residents.

It was a ‘grand’ opening

New AFRH stands ready to support veterans in Gulfport

The AFRH celebrated the official opening of the new senior living community in Gulfport with a homecoming ceremony and ribbon cutting on November 9th. Called “Glory on the Gulf,” this special event honored the AFRH residents who faithfully served America as well as today’s service members who may one day call AFRH home.

Honored guests for the event included guest speaker Mr. Robert L. Gordon III, the Deputy Under Secretary for Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, GSA Administrator Martha Johnson, Congressional, Department of Defense and Mississippi dignitaries. Additional guests included military service members from all branches of the service, Navy Band New Orleans, and a Joint Service Color Guard.

“This new Home is the ultimate pay-back for their sacrifices in defending liberty and serving America,” said AFRH Chief Operating Officer Tim Cox. “Our heroes deserve the best - and AFRH is a shining example of innovative senior health and



Cutting the ribbon to signify the official opening of the AFRH-Gulfport on November 9, 2010 is (from left) Howard Rice, Mary Kay Gominger, Rich Fisher, Steven Smith, Resident Henry Pike, Richard Heath, Bill Yates, George Schloegel, Resident Louis Nemec, Robert L. Gordon III, and Martha Johnson.

housing.”

“Glory on the Gulf,” was a very rewarding day for AFRH residents and staff as it marked the return to Gulfport after a five-year absence. The General Services Administration managed the project which

was completed by Yates Construction of Biloxi, Miss., in 30 months for a cost of approximately \$200 million.

